

## INVITING “NOT-YET” OR “NOT-NOW” FOLLOWERS OF JESUS TO A TEAM BIBLE STUDY: How to Respond to a “No” Response

Since we are trying to get teammates “who don’t do Bible Study” into our Team Bible Study (TBS) we can expect that the answer we will receive from most of them—no matter how good of a vision cast we may give—will be “no.” But many of them may say yes—at least to coming once—if we don’t take their first “no” as their final answer. How? By leveraging 1) personal friendships, 2) friendship networks on the team, 3) teammate to teammate influence and 4) the aspect of “team.”

### 1. LEVERAGING PERSONAL FRIENDSHIPS

If a teammate is a personal friend, you might be able to get him/her to come at least to the first one by mentioning that, though you respect their thoughts that the TBS may not be for them, it is very important for you, and therefore you could really use their support in getting it off the ground. Most friends won’t say “no” to helping you, their friend. If they’re willing to come, show your thankfulness, and promise that you won’t pressure them to continue to come if they truly do find that it isn’t for them. In many cases, they will continue to come because they find out that the TBS was different from what they expected.

### 2. LEVERAGING FRIENDSHIP NETWORKS ON THE TEAM

Realizing that you may not be as close to some of your teammates as you are to others, it can help to get someone else who has said yes to coming—no matter where this person who is at with Jesus, with commitment to long-term involvement in the Team Bible Study, etc.—to invite those who might not respond to you. So, when someone does say “yes” to coming, you ought to ask them if they are willing to invite their teammate friends to come with them. They even may be your best recruiters!

### 3. LEVERAGING TEAMMATE TO TEAMMATE INFLUENCE

Some of your teammates may have more influence with certain other teammates than you—e.g. a team captain, an upperclassman, etc. It is therefore very strategic that you invite them, and if they say “no” (which most likely they will) that you mention that even though you respect their thoughts that the TBS may not be for them, you don’t have much of a chance of getting certain teammates—who the TBS might really be for—to consider coming unless they (the team captain, the upper-classman, etc.) are there. From there you can ask—for the sake of your mutual teammates that might benefit from the TBS—that they please consider coming at least once (with no pressure to continue coming if they truly find that the TBS isn’t for them) and to invite these other teammates who may not respond to an invite from you to come as well.

### 4. LEVERAGE THE ASPECT OF “TEAM”

Hopefully your vision cast will speak to the ways that the “team” can benefit from having a Team Bible Study. This same aspect of “team” can be leveraged to get teammates to come. Especially on smaller teams, you can emphasize that your hopes/desires are to get the whole team to come, and that because of that, you really hope that they will come—at least once—to check it out and be with the team. In some situations, teammates have come to the TBS not because of the Bible Study, but because they saw it as a team function, and they wanted to be with the team.